

REMARKS

Claim 21 has been cancelled. Claims 1 and 22 have been amended to clarify the subject matter regarded as the invention. New Claims 25 and 26 have been added. Claims 1-20 and 22-26 are pending.

The Examiner has rejected claims 1-20 and 22-24 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Shkedy (U.S. Patent No. 6,260,024) in view of Chinnapan (U.S. Patent Application Publication No. 2002/011187[0]) and further in view of Riordan (U.S. Patent No. 6,078,891). The rejection is respectfully traversed. As amended, Claim 1 recites that “for each group of functionally equivalent components, the components in that group have properties identical to the other components in the group or have properties that fall within a predefined parametric range.” Support for the amendment can be found, without limitation, in the paragraph beginning on line 12 of page 15 of the Specification.

The Examiner has acknowledged that Shkedy fails to teach generating a generic specification for requested goods, wherein for each group of functionally equivalent components, there is one unique number and a plurality of supplier generated numbers. The Examiner has suggested, however, that Riordan teaches this limitation. Riordan describes a scheme in which a universal identification code (UIDC) is “descriptive of a particular product or service **category** in such a manner that the critical characteristics of the product or service **category** can be determined by resorting to the UIDC definitions associated with the **category's** code.” (Riordan, 8:17-24). The example provided in Riordan is that of a pair of tennis shoes: “A first segment would identify tennis shoes as belonging to the **category** of clothing ... [a] second segment would identify tennis shoes as belonging to the **subcategory** of footwear ... [a] third segment would identify tennis shoes as belonging to the **subcategory** of athletic footwear ... [a] fourth segment would uniquely identify the product **category** of tennis shoes.” (Riordan, 8:34-48). Then, “[o]nce a hierarchical coding scheme is adopted, each product or service ... is assigned one or more UIDCs corresponding to the product **categories to which the product or service belongs**. In the above example, Nike™ tennis shoes and Addidas™ tennis shoes, each bearing distinct UPC codes, would be assigned the **same** UIDC corresponding to the tennis-shoe product **category**.” (Riordan, 8:54-61).

Under Riordan, Nike™ tennis shoes and Addidas™ tennis shoes are treated the same – they both have the same UIDC because they are both tennis shoes (in a tennis shoe category), **irrespective of the actual attributes of those products** (e.g., size, color, style, etc.). Additionally, because Riordan assigns UIDCs based on hierarchical categories, rather than properties of the product or service, Riordan contemplates assigning “one **or more** UIDCs” to a single product or service. As recited in Claim 1, functionally equivalent components have “**properties identical** to the other components in the group or have **properties that fall within a predefined parametric range.**” (E.g., the same size and color.) As such, Riordan does not teach that “for each group of functionally equivalent components, the components in that group have properties identical to the other components in the group or have properties that fall within a predefined parametric range” and Claim 1 is believed to be allowable.

Claims 2-20 and 23-24 depend from Claim 1 and are believed to be allowable for the same reasons described above.

Similar to Claim 1, Claim 22 recites that “for each group of functionally equivalent components, the components in that group have properties identical to the other components in the group or have properties that fall within a predefined parametric range.” Therefore Claim 22 is believed to be allowable.

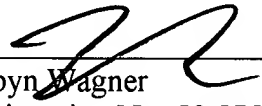
New Claims 25 and 26 recite a system for carrying out the method of Claim 1 and program code for carrying out the method of Claim 1, respectively. Therefore, it is believed that Claims 25 and 26 are also allowable.

The foregoing amendments are not to be taken as an admission of unpatentability of any of the claims prior to the amendments.

Reconsideration of the application and allowance of all claims are respectfully requested based on the preceding remarks. If at any time the Examiner believes that an interview would be helpful, please contact the undersigned.

Respectfully submitted,

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